

DCFS Weekly Update From the State Office

Friday, June 30, 2000

Top Ten Reasons Why We Are Building Our Practice Model

By Richard Anderson

I realize that using the "top ten" idea leads us to a more comical expectation, but this is one of a more earnest nature.

10. Clarifies the philosophy of child welfare practice in the Division and brings it to life in our interactions inside and outside of the organization.
9. Provides standards for **how** we interact with children, families, communities, and each other, based on our philosophy.
8. Sets an atmosphere for and makes a commitment to continual improvement of our practice skills.
7. Provides a baseline of practice for measurement of successful outcomes and compiling of best practices that can be trained and provided for all of us.
6. Establishes a standard that will be used for improved research of our work at the real practice level.
5. Provides for all levels in the Division to be on an even status regarding expectations of good practice.
4. Increases the rigor with which we prepare our new staff.
3. Establishes the discipline by which we will be known in the community through our guarantee of certain skills that we deliver consistently and effectively (trademark of the Division = the best engaging, assessing, planning, and teaming).
2. Establishes training that not only provides knowledge but the skills, practice, coaching, support, and mentoring to put that knowledge to effective use.

And the number one reason we are building our Practice Model:

1. Builds confidence in ourselves that we have a unified, validated, consistent professional offering to make to each child, each family, and all communities.

Just so all of you know what I have to put up with at the state office, here is what Mary Steck, the person who is supposed to support me (and she really does!), gave me.

Mary's Practice Model Top Ten List

10. Badges of courage are awarded for admitting you don't have a clue.
9. With a mentor, you don't have to waste time making friends.

8. We learn skills and competencies that will benefit us in all aspects of our lives—if and when we have time to live one.
7. You don't have to buy a diamond to get "engaged!"
6. All our hose are "support hose."
5. When we get caught goofing off at the water cooler, we can always tell them we're participating in ongoing peer consultations.
4. We refer to our family as "The Service Team."
3. Keeps your boss busy and pretty much out of your hair.
2. Should keep us from sinking as we walk on water.

And Mary's top ten reason for our Practice Model:

1. Might even help a child now and then!

Preliminary Review of Step-Down Actions; Report Issued by the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group

By Carol Miller

On June 19, 2000, the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group (the Child Welfare Group) issued its preliminary report about the findings of a special step-down study conducted in response to a meeting that occurred between the Division, the Child Welfare Group, and attorneys from the National Center for Youth Law. In this meeting, it was agreed that a small-scale study would be conducted involving a limited sample of children who were moved from "D" Code placements to lower cost placements to determine the appropriateness of the placement changes. For all of those who participated, we want to thank you for all of your efforts in discussing your case with Adrienne Warr.

The Salt Lake Tribune published an article about this preliminary report on Wednesday, June 28, 2000, entitled "Cutbacks Called Dangerous to Children." We wanted to take this opportunity to inform you of the positive steps being taken by the Division in this regard.

It is important to note that the preliminary report includes results from 17 of the 25 selected case reviews. Also, qualitative information obtained during the case reviews was not included in the preliminary report. The remainder of the cases and the qualitative data will be reported on in the future. This additional information may provide us with greater insight into the problems associated with step-down placements. This information will be used to assist the Division in creating protocols and procedures for placing children in and removing them from high cost placements.

The Division is currently working with a Utilization Review team to create a standard way of conducting Utilization Reviews for children in our care. In addition, the Division is proposing to review all of the cases where children have been moved out of “D” Code placements to ensure that the current placements are appropriate and safe for everyone involved. Lastly, the Office of Services Review has proposed to conduct a “vexing problem study” to include all high cost placement cases.

We are aware of the negative affect this type of publicity can have on you and your work. We want to thank all of you for your dedication, continued support, and hard work. We greatly appreciate your endurance. When the final report is available, we will share the results and their meanings with you.

How to Determine if a Child has Head Lice; The Tale-Tell Signs

By the Health Care Team, Western Region

- A child’s hat walks to school by itself.
- After running your fingers through a child’s hair, you find your inch long fingernails have been bitten off.
- A child’s hair is waving in the breeze, only there is no breeze.
- You notice that Johnny’s hair, which was parted on the left, is now parting itself on the right or in the middle.
- You notice that Suzie’s animal barrettes have arranged themselves into a circus parade.
- An angry buzzing sound is heard when a child’s hair is disturbed.

Please be aware that lice usually do not cause infections or diseases. However, they are socially unacceptable and extremely contagious.

What is the treatment for head lice?

Medicated shampoos or cream rinses are used to kill lice. They are available from your doctor or over-the-counter. Some shampoos are not recommended for infants, young children, or women who are pregnant or breast-feeding. Always follow the directions on the label of the shampoo. The shampoo should be used again in seven to 10 days to make sure any lice that hatched after the first treatment are killed. Special fine-toothed combs are usually available with the shampoo to aid in removing nits (eggs), but often nits will need to be picked out of the hair.

According to the American Head Lice Information Center, olive oil can be used as an effective method of eradicating resistant head lice. Recent experiments by entomologists at Harvard School of Public Health confirm that olive oil smothers and kills active head lice, even if they are resistant to pediculicidal shampoos. Olive oil

should be applied to the scalp for several hours, preferably over night, and washed thoroughly, then comb the hair with a fine nit comb. This must be repeated according the following schedule: Day 1 (initial treatment), Day 2, Day 5, Day 9, Day 13, Day 17, and Day 21. The treatments have been carefully timed to coincide with the lifecycle of the louse. You may do the treatments more often if you like, but do not miss any of these days or, chances are, you will have to start all over. The olive oil kills by covering the holes through which the lice breathe. If lice are not completely covered by the oil, they may not die. But the oil will slow them down, allowing them to be caught in the nit comb. If the pediculicide fails to kill a bug, it means that the bug is resistant and will never be killed by that chemical, no matter how many times you use it. This is not true with olive oil. Each time you use the olive oil, it has a good chance of killing each bug.

Head lice can be acquired through contact with items used by an infested person. Just about every item that touches the head or shoulders can transmit lice. Therefore, it is crucial that all personal head gear (hats, hair ribbons, etc.) scarves, coats, towels, and bed linens be cleaned by machine washing in hot water and dried using the hot cycle of a dryer for at least 20 minutes. Soaking in hot water (above 130° F) for five to 10 minutes should clean combs and brushes.

Clothing, bedspreads, blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals that cannot be washed should be dry-cleaned or sealed in a plastic bag for a period of two weeks.

Vacuum everywhere. It is recommended that all rooms and furniture used by infested household members be thoroughly vacuumed. Vacuum all carpets, mattresses, upholstered furniture, and car seats. Make sure to empty the vacuum outside in the garbage—do not leave the vacuum in the house without emptying it. Lice do not jump, but they do crawl.

If you would like additional information, please contact the local health department in your area.

References:

*Nix, Warner-Lambert Consumer Healthcare
City-County Health Department of Utah County
American Head Lice Information Center*